

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An optical fiber comprising:
 - a radial axis;
 - a longitudinal axis;
 - a first ~~window~~ surface having a normal direction that is not parallel to a direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface, wherein the first ~~window~~ surface is adapted for receiving pump radiation and transmitting the pump radiation into the optical fiber, and wherein the first surface is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the optical fiber at a point where the pump radiation is incident on the first surface;
 - a second surface adapted for totally internally reflecting pump radiation received within the optical fiber; and
 - an active region within the optical fiber for generating radiation at a characteristic wavelength when pumped with pump radiation.
2. (Currently Amended) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein an angle between the normal direction of the first ~~window~~ surface and the direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface is greater than about 15 degrees.
3. (Currently Amended) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein an angle between the normal direction of the first ~~window~~ surface and the direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface is greater than about 45 degrees.
4. (Currently Amended) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein an angle between the normal direction of the first ~~window~~ surface and the direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface is greater than about 60 degrees.

5. (Currently Amended) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein the normal direction of the first **window** surface is substantially perpendicular to the direction of the radial axis at the first **window** surface.

6. (Canceled).

7. (Currently Amended) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein the first **window** surface is substantially flat.

8. (Original) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein an angle between a normal direction of the second surface and a direction of the radial axis at the second surface is less than about 30 degrees.

9. (Original) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein a normal direction of the second surface is substantially parallel to a direction of the radial axis at the second surface.

10. (Original) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein the second surface is curved.

11. (Currently Amended) The optical fiber of claim 1, further comprising a third **window** surface having a normal direction that is not parallel to a direction of the radial axis at the third **window** surface, wherein the third **window** surface is adapted for receiving pump radiation.

12. (Currently Amended) The optical fiber of claim 11, wherein the third **window** surface is substantially flat.

13. (Original) The optical fiber of claim 1, wherein the active region has a transverse dimension smaller than the characteristic wavelength.

14. (Currently Amended) A fiber laser assembly, comprising:
(a) an optical fiber comprising:

(1) a radial axis;

(2) a longitudinal axis;

(3) a first ~~window~~ surface having a normal direction that is not parallel to a direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface, wherein the first ~~window~~ surface is adapted for receiving pump radiation and transmitting the pump radiation into the optical fiber, and wherein the first surface is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the optical fiber at a point where the pump radiation is incident on the first surface;

(4) a second surface adapted for totally internally reflecting pump radiation received within the optical fiber; and

(5) an active region within the optical fiber for generating radiation at a characteristic wavelength when pumped with pump radiation;

(b) a diode laser array adapted for emitting the pump radiation; and

(c) an optical element disposed between the diode laser array and the first surface and adapted for guiding pump radiation from the diode laser array to the first ~~window~~ surface of the optical fiber.

15. (Currently Amended) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein an angle between the normal direction of the first ~~window~~ surface and the direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface is greater than about 15 degrees.

16. (Currently Amended) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein an angle between the normal direction of the first ~~window~~ surface and the direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface is greater than about 45 degrees.

17. (Currently Amended) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein an angle between the normal direction of the first ~~window~~ surface and the direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface is greater than about 60 degrees.

18. (Currently Amended) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein the normal direction of the first ~~window~~ surface is substantially perpendicular to the direction of the radial axis at the first ~~window~~ surface.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Currently Amended) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein the first ~~window~~ surface is substantially flat.

21. (Original) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein an angle between a normal direction of the second surface and a direction of the radial axis at the second surface is less than about 30 degrees.

22. (Original) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein a normal direction of the second surface is substantially parallel to a direction of the radial axis at the second surface.

23. (Original) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein the second surface is curved.

24. (Currently Amended) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, further comprising a third ~~window~~ surface having a normal direction that is not parallel to a direction of the radial axis at the third ~~window~~ surface, wherein the third ~~window~~ surface is adapted for receiving pump radiation.

25. (Currently Amended) The fiber laser assembly of claim 24, wherein the third ~~window~~ surface is substantially flat.

26. (Original) The fiber laser assembly of claim 14, wherein the active region has a transverse dimension smaller than the characteristic wavelength.

27. (Currently Amended) A method of pumping a fiber laser having a longitudinal axis, a radial axis, and an azimuthal axis, the method comprising:

producing a beam of pump radiation;

injecting the beam of pump radiation into the fiber laser through a surface of the fiber

laser and in a direction such that the beam of pump radiation has a component along the longitudinal axis, the radial axis, and the azimuthal axis of the fiber laser,
wherein the surface has a normal direction that is not parallel to a direction of the radial axis at the surface, and wherein the surface is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis at a point where the pump radiation is incident on the surface.

28. (Canceled).

29. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the beam of pump radiation is produced by a diode laser array.